

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLP #1453/01 1822109
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 302109Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7882
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 8119
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5470
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 9412
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 6631
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3730
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4010
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 6354
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 1077
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 1252
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 001453

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: BOLIVIAN SECURITY ASSURANCES STILL FAR FROM IDEAL

REF: A. LA PAZ 1391
[1](#)B. LA PAZ 1406
[1](#)C. LA PAZ 1426
[1](#)D. LA PAZ 1435

Classified By: EcoPol Chief Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. In a response to our diplomatic note presented June 19, the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) provided us a note (text para 8) that continued to defend its actions regarding the June 9 attack on the Embassy. Although the MFA said it will comply with its Vienna Convention obligations, the response made no reference to our request that the government take appropriate action against protest-instigator Roberto de la Cruz. Recent statements made by Vice-President Garcia Linera requesting that a "hard hand" be used on opposition groups that similarly protested in front of the Venezuelan consulate in Santa Cruz suggest that a security double-standard is in effect. We will be providing another dipnote to the MFA regarding security threats to USAID personnel and property in the Chapare region of Cochabamba. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) The MFA delivered their response to U.S. Diplomatic Note 195 on June 30. The MFA remained on the defensive, citing article 22 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, and stating that the Bolivian Government did what was necessary June 9 to "protect the American Embassy's facilities from all intrusion or damage."

[1](#)3. (C) The response note also addressed the concerns over the removal of the Police Commander of La Paz on June 10. The MFA states that the removal "should not be construed as contradictory to the governmental responsibility." According to the note, the decision was had already been made under a "programming policy" and "included the removal of other police authorities in several departments." (NOTE: This response ignores Minister of Government Rada's June 9 declarations that the police commander used "repressive force" and acted inappropriately against the demonstrators. END NOTE) They assure that the security of the Mission and its employees "will be guaranteed with similar or higher effectiveness."

[1](#)4. (C) The Government also took the opportunity to point out that the protest was motivated by El Alto leaders and citizens who have felt "negatively affected" by the USG decision to grant asylum to Former Defense Minister Carlos

Sanchez Berzain, currently indicted for a slew of charges including genocide. (NOTE: The MFA does not mention protest leader Roberto de la Cruz nor any plans to act on de la Cruz' current threats to the Embassy. De la Cruz continues to threaten to burn down the Embassy and burned a scale model of the Chancery at a rally in El Alto. END NOTE.)

¶5. (C) The response note comes two days after Vice-President Garcia Linera criticized Santa Cruz Youth opposition group Union Juvenil Cruceñista (UJC) for protesting at the Venezuelan Consulate in Santa Cruz. Garcia Linera requested a "mano dura" (hard hand) be used on the participants, despite no one being reported injured.

¶6. (C) In a separate incident over the weekend, the Government moved quickly to arrest 3 youths that were alleged to be carrying dynamite sticks in Sucre during the prefecture elections. These students represent the opposition, hence the swift Government reaction. We plan to cite these arrests as we continue to ask that the Government take similar actions against those who carry dynamite in protests aimed at us.

¶7. (C) We are preparing yet another dipnote regarding recent threats and actions from cocaleros against USAID facilities and personnel. The dipnote will clearly outline legal obligations under both the Vienna Convention and the bilateral assistance arrangement between the U.S. and Bolivia. The note will also ask for an explanation for President Evo Morales' statements congratulating the cocaleros' decision to remove USAID from the Chapare region.

¶8. (C) TRANSLATED TEXT OF THE DIPLOMATIC NOTE:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Vice Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, present its compliments to the Honorable Embassy of the United States of America and acknowledges receipt of its note No. 195 dated June 19, in which the Embassy expresses its concern about the security status of the Diplomatic Mission in the wake of the June 9 demonstration, which occurred in its surroundings.

In this regard, the Foreign Ministry of the Republic wishes to express to the Honorable Mission that Bolivia is respectful of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, and for this reason it ratifies the compliance of Article 22 of the Convention, on the adoption of all appropriate measures necessary to protect the American Embassy's facilities from all intrusion or damage.

In compliance with such commitment, on June 9, the Government of Bolivia complied with its duty to protect the American Embassy with effectiveness; to that purpose the necessary security measures were taken through the Bolivian Police. Within the responsibility of the Bolivian state, it is expressed that in the future, if necessary, the security of the facilities of the Honorable Diplomatic Mission, as well as of the employees that work in it, will be guaranteed with similar or higher effectiveness.

The Foreign Ministry also wants to express to the Honorable Diplomatic Mission that the removal of the Police Departmental Commander of the Department of La Paz should not be construed as contradictory to the governmental responsibility mentioned in the preceding paragraphs; such decision was made with a previously established programming policy for the Bolivian National Police, which also included the removal of other police authorities in several departments.

While reiterating the responsibility of the Government of Bolivia to provide security and protection to the Honorable Diplomatic Mission and to its employees, the Foreign ministry, however wishes to appeal to the understanding of the Honorable Mission on the grounds that such protest was motivated by leaders, residents, and civic institutions of the city of El Alto, who feel negatively affected by the U.S. Government's decision to grant political asylum to Mr. Carlos Sanchez Berzain who is being indicted in

Bolivia for the crimes of genocide, homicide, serious injuries, most serious injuries, and crimes against freedom of the press, which were perpetrated mainly against the civil residents of that city.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Vice Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, avails itself this opportunity to reiterate the Honorable Embassy of the united States of America the assurances of its distinguished consideration. END TEXT.

URS